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Technical Report No. 5

PROPERTIES AND PHASE TRANSITIONS IN POLYPHOSPHAZENES

Lecture Abstract presented at the Japanese High Polymer Conference

Kyoto, April 27-29 1987, JAPAN

by

J. H. Magill
Department of Materials Science and
Chemical/Petroleum Engineering
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15261



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REPORT	DOCUMENTATION PAGE
18 REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	16 RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS
NONE	NONE
28 SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY NONE	3 DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF REPORT
26 DECLASSIFICATION / DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE	Unlimited
NONE	
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)	S. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)
ONR #5	ONR N00014-85-K-0358
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(If applica	
University of Pittsburgh	Office of Naval Research
& ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) 848 Benedum Engineering Hall	76. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) 800 North Quincy Avenue
School of Engineering	Arlington, VA 22217
Univ. of Pittsburgh, Pgh, PA 15261	
8a. NAME OF FUNDING / SPONSORING OF SPONSORING OF application	
Office of Naval Research	~′
BC. ADDRESS (City, State, and 2IP Code)	10 SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS
800 N. Quincy Avenue	PROGRAM PROJECT TASK WORK UNIT
Arlington, VA 22217	ELEMENT NO. NO NO ACCESSION N 413C-013
11 TITLE (Include Security Classification)	
Technical FROM TO	14 DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 15 PAGE COUNT July 28, 1987
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PROPERTIES AND PHASE TRANSITIONS IN POLYPHOSPHAZENES

J.H Magill

School of Engineering, University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15261, U.S.A.

Polyphosphazenes were first synthesised towards the end of the last century, but it was not until the mid 1960 that linear polyphosphazenes were prepared (1). Now, a wide variety of polymers and copolymers with alkoxy, aryloxy and aminoxy groups have been synthesised (see Figure 1). Recently, side chains have been connected directly to the backbone phosphorus modifying physical properties considerably (2). Variations in side group chemistry enables a wide span in properties to be covered ranging from glass temperatures approaching -100°C to melting points well above 300°C in some systems. Thermotropic behavior persists over a range of temperature from Tm to T(1) depicts the range of this disordered phase seen in Figure 2. Interestingly a useful empirical relationship (Figure 3) has been established (3) involving Tg, T(1) and Tm. The thermotropic range [Tm-T(1)] scales with the side group chemistry for these polymers.

At this point it is appropriate to digress to some practical aspects of these polymers since my polyphosphazene research was first involved with the thermal stability and toxicity of these polymers. The lower toxicity of the degradation products of halogen-free polyphosphazenes (i.e. those closest to D.FIR in Figure 4) proved to be appealing, although it was also realized that specimens with halogen substituents normally raise the oxygen index of polymers generally, which is also desirable ⁽⁴⁾. This dichotomy may only be resolved through an appropriate hazard index involving critical parameters for the test evaluation. Analytical and animal testing procedures ⁽⁵⁾ established

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patterns of behavior for polyphosphazenes in relation to other commercial polymers. It was further determined that degradation mechanisms were also important in determining thermal stability. For example, alkoxy phosphazenes degraded primarily via a "chain unzipping" process leaving little or no residue, whereas aryloxyphosphazenes mostly disintegrated through random chain scission (involving some chain transfer too) leaving a substantial residue (6). Materials that characteristically leave relatively large amounts of intumescent residues (30 wt % or more) are invariably useful as substrate coatings since heat transfer is curtailed through the creation of such a layer. Poly(aminoxyphosphazenes) are most liable to cross-link creating the largest quantities of char in these polymers. Polyphosphazenes containing additives, have also been studied but exhibited no synergism between additives and polymers⁽⁷⁾.

Flammability and flame spread are important commercially but are not well understood. Anyhow, our purpose here was to attempt to establish a useful potential hazard index scale (PHI) for comparing polyphosphazenes with other commercial plastics. Several such relationships have been established empirically ⁽⁸⁾. In our case the relation

PHI = $(W_{max})D_m(\Delta H_c)/(LC_{50})$ OI (T_{max})

proved useful where W_{max} is the maximum weight loss over 100° C interval, D_{m} is the smoke density, ΔH_{c} is the beat of combustion, LC_{50} is the 50% mortality value 0.I. is the oxygen index and T_{max} the temperature where maximum weight loss occurs. For comparative testing this relationship showed promise whenever a reference material like Douglas Fir was involved (see Table 1). However, it proved to experimentally demanding because of the many parameters involved.

The thermotropic or disordered nature of many polyphosphazenes usually covers a relatively wide range of temperature and imposes a degree of complexity greater than that which exists in semicrystalline homopolymers alone. Before turning to some of these results, it is important to note that short alkyl groups connected directly to the backbone phosphorus destroys thermotropic behavior.

Transitional changes in polyphosphazenes have been studied extensively by thermal techniques. Current investigations are concerned with the coexistence of different morphological forms and phases formed from the melt and from solution. Strikingly, the disappearance of Tg after heat treatment close to or above T_m is accompanied by a substantial increase in sample crystallinity (curve 5 in Figure 5) above 90%, compared to the level found in solution grown crystals (~40%). This behavior is elaborated upon in other papers (9,10) presented at this conference.

X-ray structure diffraction alone has not been very useful in establishing the many polymorphic forms found recently in polyphosphazenes by electron microscopy and diffraction (11,12). However, physical differences sometimes arise between thin and thick specimens for morphological and other reasons relating to the framework of heat treatment used in sample preparation. For instance, Figure 6 shows the crystal modifications found for poly(bisphenoxyphosphazene)(13). The lamellar crystals formed from solution (α -form) transform upon heating into a 2D hexagonal δ -form which may be quenched in this disordered state(11). Only when it is annealed just below T(1) does it crystallize as a 3D hexagonal form - designated as ε -form. However, when the α -form is heated through T(1) (but $\langle T_m \rangle$ and cooled again, it is further stabilized to a λ chain-extended form (14).

Tensile and dynamic mechanical properties also undergo significant changes on passing through the T(1) transition which represents an upper limit to the engineering properties of polyphosphazenes. Figure 7 illustrates the change in dynamic moduli E' (storage) and E" (loss) as well as the significant variation in tan δ at T_g and T(1) respectively⁽¹⁵⁾. Consistent with these properties is a change in density which is about δZ at each of T(1) and T_m even though the corresponding change in thermal and associated properties is much less⁽¹⁶⁾. Creep, refractive index and other properties also exhibit transitional behavior.

Another important feature is the kinetics of phase transformations in polyphosphazenes as measured by DSC (17) and X-ray scattering (small and wide angle) techniques (18). The transformation from the isotropic phase to the 2D form below $\mathbf{T}_{\mathbf{m}}$ is too rapid to follow even using synchrotron radiation. However, the isothermal 2D to 3D transition associated with T(1) has been investigated successfully by both methods. The extent of this phase change followed by thermal analysis is dependent upon undercooling. The half-time values (Figure 8) of the transformations are independent of the X-ray scattering technique though each inherently different sensitivities. Phase kinetics are internally consistent, and this broad properties approach serves as an overview of our work which will be discussed in more detail in the lecture.

Acknowledgement

Thanks is due to the National Science Foundation (Polymer Program), Office of Naval Research (Chemistry Program) and Pennsylvania Science and Engineering Foundation for support of this work.

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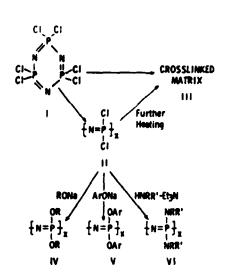


Figure 1
Synthesis
Scheme

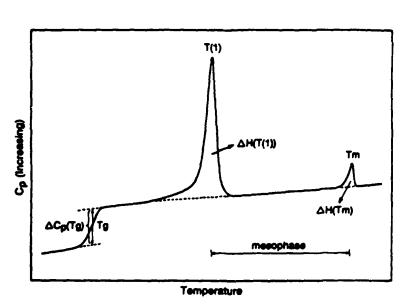


Figure 2 Transitions in polyphosphazenes

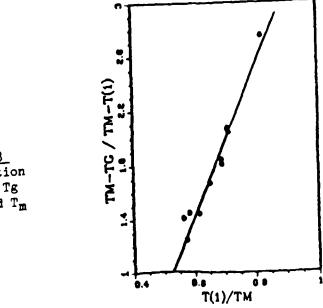
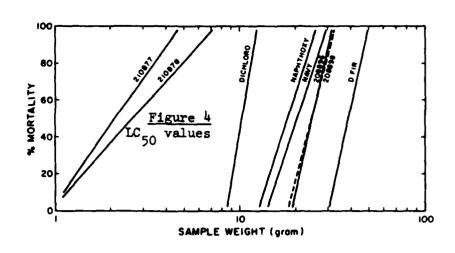


Figure 3 Correlation between Tg T(1) and T_m



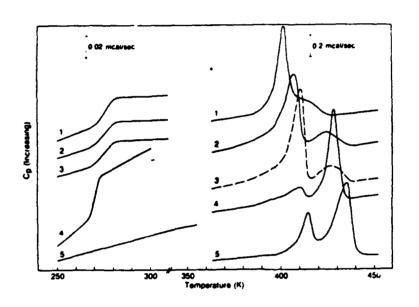
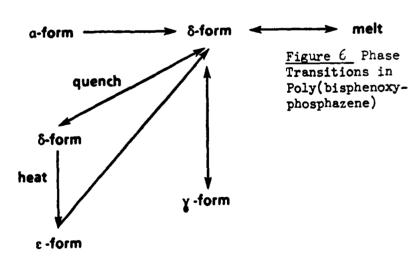


Figure 5 Tg and T(1) transitions in Poly(biophenoxy-phosphazene)

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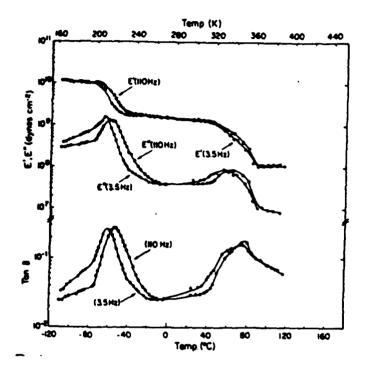
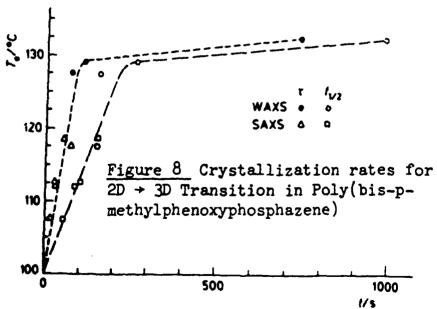


Figure 7 Phase Transitions in Poly (bistrifluoroethoxyphosphazene)

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NATERIALS DESCRIPTION	6	AHC (KJ/B)	S	T (f)	V (b)	Vac (b) LC50 PWI (c)
G421, flexible polyurethane form	2	28.2(0)	204(e)	713(3)	€ ₹	13.0(*) 28
GG25, High resilience flexible polyurathene foam	22	26.6(*)	127(4)	693(4)	3	8.3(*) 17
G431, rigid polywrethame form with fire retardants	*	26.4(4)	775(4)	593(0)	8	8.2(4) 60
APW, polysryloxyphosphasene ^(d) form with Al_2O_3 . $3H_2O_3$ and Mg (OH),	35	26.0(*)	001	5	ļ	•
Douglas Fir	23		91	623	3 8	63.7
 astimated value. maximum veight lose over any 100°C interval. value relative to Douglas Fir. phenoxy-ethylphenoxycopolymer reference #35 sample temperature where maximum veight loss occurs. 	100°C ;	Interval. Ight loss occ				•

Potential Hazard Index Values for Selected Polymers Table 1

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